

Media and Information Literacy

Quarter 2 – Module 7: Opportunities, Challenges and Threats in Media and Information

This instructional material was collaboratively developed and reviewed by educators from public and private schools, colleges, and or/universities. We encourage teachers and other education stakeholders to email their feedback, comments, and recommendations to the Department of Education at action@deped.gov.ph.

We value your feedback and recommendations.

Lesson 1

Opportunities, Challenges and Threats in Media and Information

Do you ever wonder what makes technology in business, education and other sectors so important? The answer to this question is evident – technology saves time and effort, and most importantly, it improves communication.

Technology refers to the knowledge and utilization of tools, techniques, and systems to serve a bigger purpose like solving problems or making life easier and better.

Technology, particularly the use of internet, is vital in achieving any business goal as it renders every transaction / activity efficient, i.e., achieving maximum productivity with minimum wasted resources.



What is It

A Powerful Tool

Media and information literacy, an essential component of the Senior High School Curriculum, fosters equitable access to information and knowledge, which, in turn, open up opportunities. It is a field that deals with the effects of various mass media.

Media and information are a powerful voice of the people to express feelings and thoughts. People nowadays are already media and information literate, but to engage in a digital society, one needs to be able to use these tools, and inquire, understand, communicate, and think critically.

A. Opportunities, Challenges, Threats and Risks in Media and Information

Modern professionals, students and adults use online materials to gather the needed information for any research work. The Internet has made research work easier. Is this a sign of progress? Some would say that the use of technology is not always a sign of progress. For them, the use of traditional methods such as government documents, minutes of the meeting, journalistic writings, eyewitness accounts and other information sources is more effective than the use of modern technology specifically the “internet”.

UNESCO recognizes that the internet holds enormous potential for development. It provides an unprecedented volume of resources for information and knowledge that opens up new opportunities and challenges for expression and participation.

The principle of freedom of expression and human rights must apply not only to traditional media but also to the internet and all types of emerging media platforms, which will contribute to development, democracy and dialogue.

Digitalization and the accessibility of information through a wide range of devices have enormously increased the information resources available to people. The internet provides numerous and diverse opportunities towards attaining our goals and objectives in life. It has positive effects in education and in economic growth.

For example, online marketing has become vital to business success, as it has a wider audience reach. A wider audience reach leads to increased product awareness, which, in turn, results in higher sales.

In education, the use of technology is vital. It makes information sharing convenient. In addition, educators use it to supplement lessons and to conduct online classes.

Opportunities

Online Shopping. Through online shopping and by using a web browser, consumers can directly buy goods over the internet. Consumers may visit the website of the retailer directly or search alternative vendors’ websites using a shopping search engine.

Citizen Journalism. It is the collection, dissemination and analysis of news and information by the general public, especially by means of internet.

Suggested definition of Citizen Journalism from International Media Support, which references to “untrained” citizens, on page 4 of the document on this link:

https://www.mediasupport.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Zim_IMS-Citizen-Journalism-1-1.pdf

Online Education. With internet connection, anyone can earn a degree without having to attend face-to-face class sessions.

Challenges

Age-inappropriate content. With the unabated spread of media, one has to be very careful about access. There is a wealth of information one can gain from the Internet, but there is also content that is unfit for children and young people like pornography and violence.

Illegal content. The Internet has also been, and continues to be, used by unscrupulous people to further their illegal activities, like *human trafficking*, the use of force, force, fraud, or coercion to obtain a commercial sex act or labor, and *child pornography*. Some groups also use the internet to further the ideas of *racism* and *discrimination*.

Privacy invasion and identity theft. Data posted on the Internet may be accessed and used for illegal activities. Personal information may be willingly shared as pictures or text on social media or inadvertently given by users as part of such offerings as games or surveys. It is important for users to be aware of the risks before they decide to share their personal data. A way to get sensitive personal information is *phishing*. It is the fraudulent attempt to obtain sensitive information such as username, passwords and credit card details by disguising oneself as a trustworthy entity in an electronic communication.

Threats and Risks of Media and Information

It is stated in the Philippine Constitution that each person has the right to freedom of opinion and expression. This right includes freedom to hold and express opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

With this right, we can negotiate, chat, and express our opinions and ideas, provided that we show respect to persons whose opinions differ from ours. Showing respect means listening to others as they explain their respective sides and trying to understand their perspective and why. We do not have to agree with them. Instead of dismissing them, we can engage them in a discussion and avoid being aggressive. We can disagree peacefully.

Furthermore, this simply tells us that we should never abuse and misuse our freedom of speech. Always remember that an opinion is a self-report of feelings or personal judgement accompanied by responsibility of thought.

These are some laws against the abuse and misuse of media and information, which violate the rights of others and threaten them in some ways.

Libel / Slander

A person commits libel if he/she, with malice, publishes a false statement that is damaging to another person's reputation, office, trade, business or means of livelihood. In the Philippine constitution, libel is a violation of Article 355 of the Revised Penal Code. As stated in this article, libel can be committed in the form of writing, printing, and other similar means. If the hurtful statement is spoken, the statement is *slander*.

General example of libel/slander: Spreading false rumors about someone having an extra-marital affair, damaging the person's reputation.

Piracy

Piracy refers to the unauthorized duplication of copyrighted content that is then sold at substantially lower prices in the black market. It is illegal under the Cybercrime Law, which states that acquiring any digital copy of any copyrighted material is punishable by fine from Php 200,000 to Php 500,000 and six to twenty years in prison. The Intellectual Property Code and the Anti-Camcording Law were previously in place to combat piracy in the country.

Piracy is a form of theft as it takes away from the producers and artists the rightful compensation due them such as patent/royalty fees, product sales revenues, etc. In 2011, the Washington-based office of the US Trade Representative (USTR) as one of the world's listed Quiapo in Manila among the 21 most "notorious markets" for pirated and counterfeit goods. It was removed from the list in 2012, but over the years, piracy has proliferated via the Internet, aided mainly by the ease of access to technology.

Cybercrime Law

The Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012 (Republic Act No. 10175) covers all other online anomalies such as identity theft, child pornography, data misuse, cybersquatting and other computer-related and internet facilitated practices. This law became controversial in 2012-2013 since it also criminalizes libel in the online world, limiting certain exercises of freedom of expression.

B. Education, Economic, Social and Political Aspects and Influences of Media and Information Literacy

Media Innovation

What is innovation? It is the process of developing a new method or process or product that better serves existing uses or start to serve a previously unidentified need. When we talk about media innovation, it includes the change in several aspects of the media landscape – from the development of new media platforms to new business models, to new ways of producing media texts changes in other areas such as education, society, economy and politics.

Over time, there are always areas for improvement and advancement in media. Innovation in media would mean new media associated with telephones and communications, computers and internet, virtual worlds, website games, human-computer interface, computer animation and other related media improvements and advancements.

Influence of Media on Education

Nowadays, media plays a crucial role in strengthening society as it helps us to know the current societal issues not only locally but also globally. It also enhances the teaching and learning processes inside the four walls of the classrooms. Media comes in different forms and each form affects the way people learn and interpret information.

Some platforms can be employed to reinforce concepts and spark discussions, such as short films, written articles, blog postings, and other digital media. Teachers can use modern technology, such as an interactive Smart Board, to deliver the lessons and activities. However, a piece of chalk, blackboard, Manila paper and other non-digital or non-interactive interactive instruments like CDs and DVDs can still be used to aid teachers in conducting lessons if the resources are limited.

Various media can be used in the classrooms to hone critical thinking and problem-solving skills. For instance, a teacher can start and facilitate a discussion on an opinion article in a blog, asking students whether they agree on the position taken by the author and why / why not. Indeed, media's power should be harnessed to educate people – enlightening people's minds and training people to form opinions and find solutions to societal problems.

Influence on Society

Media's power appears unstoppable. Almost everyone is exposed to countless media images, advertisements, magazines, etc. With the advent of social media like *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *Messenger*, *Twitter*, email and the like, we are connected in ways that were not possible before. The communication line is always open. Because of these, necessary societal interactions, camaraderie, and development of friendships are facilitated.

The way we now deal with people with different personalities, opinions, and ideas, the way we access information about human life, relationships, education, careers, entertainment, and others, and the way we do business to promote products and services online are all conducted with modern media. These interactions are very different from before, when the most prominent forms of media were magazines, newspapers and books.

Economic Influence

The new media has made it possible for any individual to offer products and services online. The various media platforms are a means to augment people's income. It is indeed true that the new media affect the economic progress and stability of the country.

Innovation in media has likewise created new online jobs opportunities such as tutorials in various subjects, airline booking, art selling, product reviews on *YouTube*, blogging, photography and other IT related jobs.

Social media was once an expensive platform for businesses to advertise their products/services. But nowadays, any media-literate person and business entity can set up his / her/ its own brand to reach people and sell products and services easily.

Political Influence

With the wider internet reach in the Philippines and the corresponding increase in Filipino social media users, political individuals and parties and government agencies have realized the effectiveness and power of social media platforms in terms of public communication.

Digital Diplomacy, also called E-diplomacy or Digi diplomacy is a government's use of social media and information technology to communicate to the public, especially foreign public. Foreign ministries, embassies and other government agencies have social media accounts especially on *Twitter* and *Facebook*.

Spreading information through social media enables to directly send messages quickly and cost-effectively to the target audiences, without convening a press conference or sending a press release to news agencies. Because of this, people now have greater participation on issues facing the country and the world.

People have become informed about the subjects they need or want. Through media reports focusing on the government programs, activities, and issues, the public is informed about the political affairs and functions of the country.

Not all media effects are positive. One of the current issues about social media on political affairs is the spread of fake news, both locally and abroad. The difficulty of confirming whether social media news reports are true has led to the abuse of the medium by interest groups who share half-truths or outright lies, which has led Facebook and Twitter to remove fake accounts and purveyors of untruths.